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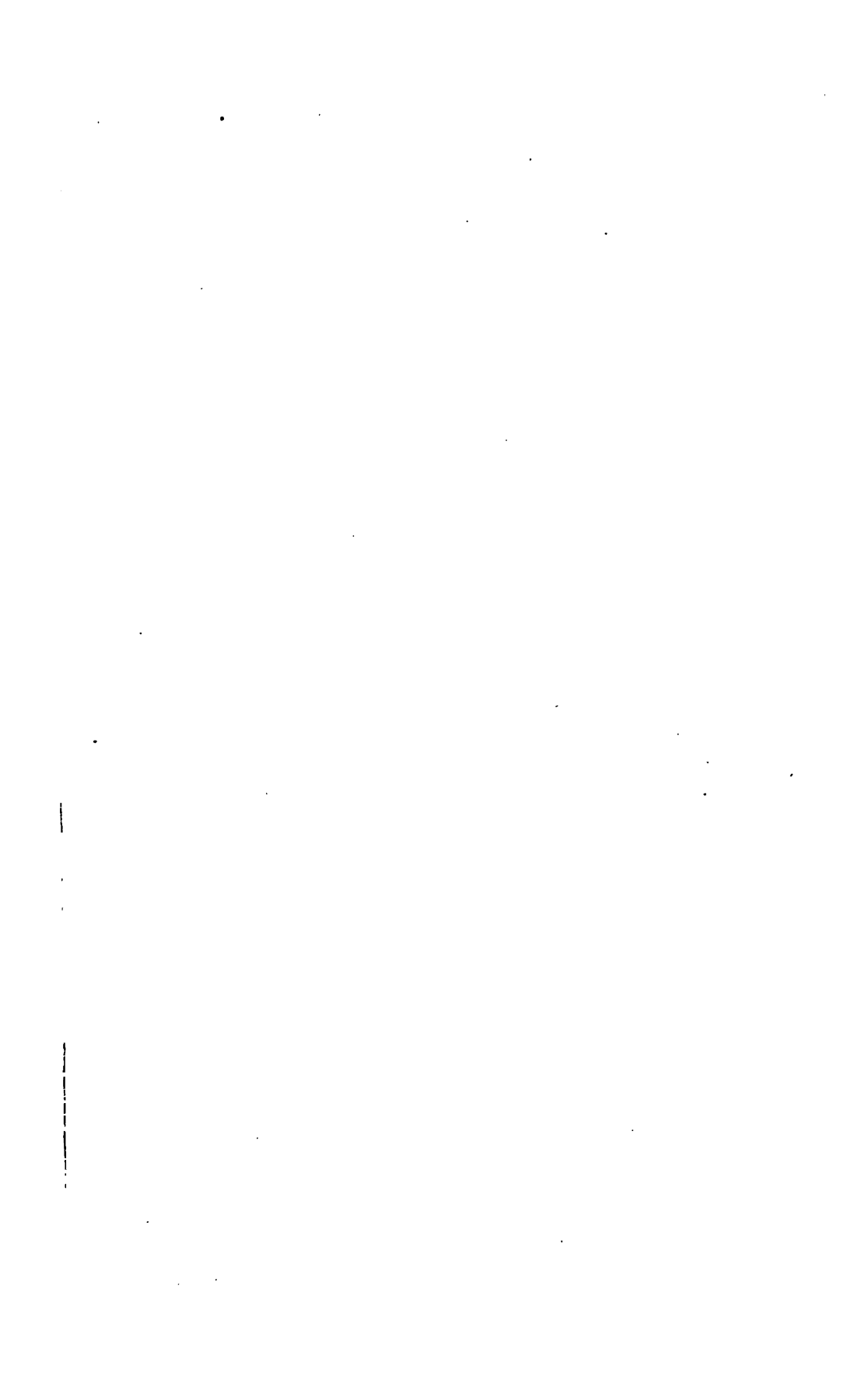
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491.



CAIUS MARIUS.

NEWCASTLE:
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CAIUS MARIUS,
THE PLEBEIAN CONSUL:

A

HISTORICAL TRAGEDY.

BY

33

THOMAS DOUBLEDAY.

LONDON:
JOHN MACRONE.

MDCCCXXXVI.

491.



CAIUS MARIUS.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

CAIUS MARIUS.

YOUNG MARIUS, *Son to Marius.*

VALERIUS, *a Youth, a Ward of Marius.*

SYLLA, *a Roman Patrician.*

TUBERO, *a Senator, Friend of Sylla, a Suitor of
Flavia.*

SATURNINUS, *a Tribune, a Friend of Marius.*

SULPICIUS, *a Friend of Marius.*

CTESIPHON, *a Greek Sophist, Tutor of Young Marius.*

LYGDAMIS, *a gigantic Gaulish Slave.*

FLAVIA, *Niece to Sylla.*

CORNELIA, *a Noble Matron, Mother of Flavia.*

BARINE, *an old Female Attendant.*

Senators, Lictors, Soldiers, Magistrates, Citizens, &c.

*The Scene is alternately at Rome, at the Farm of
Marius, and at Carthage.*

PREFACE.

It is usual in cases of works like the following, to say a few words in the shape of Preface, nor has the Author any motive on the present occasion to tempt him to imagine this custom "more honoured in the breach than the observance."—Quite the contrary ! He will only take the liberty of using the less usual form of the first person in preference to the third, as being less formal and infinitely more pleasant, when etiquette does not positively enjoin the contrary. In truth, the following Play was written in consequence of that upon which Master Barnardine, in "Measure for Measure," wisely declared, "he would not get up to be hanged ;" that is to say, "upon persuasion." The manner of it was thus :—Happening, one day,

to be in conversation with an amiable and accomplished theatrical friend of mine, he, as he had often done before, took the trouble of strongly urging me to write a serious piece expressly for the stage, accompanying the recommendation, as a matter of course, with the various arguments, "*ad negotium*," and "*ad hominem*," usual on such occasions. My reply was, in substance, that I had too little affection for the mixture of sound, scenery, and extravagance, at present in vogue, supposing me even to have the power, to have the will to help to prolong, by any act of mine, the reign, even for a single day, of so much bad taste. My friend's rejoinder was singular. I was wrong, he argued, in supposing that a Play to be successful, even at present, must exclude either nature or poetry altogether, provided it possessed the requisite quantity of dramatic *action*, and that action were of the right sort. Construct a plot, said he, in such a manner that it shall contain a series of interesting incidents, forming a story so clear and palpable that if played in dumb shew an audience would understand it, and you may, provided only

you do not exceed a certain length, fill up this outline with any language, however poetical, which shall, at the same time, be subsidiary to the main events of the piece. That this is self-evident, he asserted, because, even setting down the dialogue as *nil*, if it be not positively absurd, the play will be understood by, and arrest the attention of, the spectators : and this he averred to be indubitably true of the older dramas, or at least of the most of them that retain possession of the stage,—of Shakspeare's especially, inasmuch as he had himself seen the experiment tried at Drury Lane Theatre, and thus much was actually proved to be the fact. Macbeth, the Merchant of Venice, Hamlet, Othello, the Orphan, Venice Preserved, in short our best “acting plays” of the serious cast, I understood him to say, are all intelligible if played in dumb shew by good actors. In pure comedy much more must, of course, depend upon the wit and spirit of the dialogue, manners rather than passions being there represented ; but if the principle be true of the one, it can hardly be totally the contrary as applied to the other, and, as

I remember, the comedies of the Spanish school, such as "The Wonder," were instanced as illustrating this. I must own that this view of the matter appeared to me to be at once so ingenious, so novel, and so plausible, that it made a considerable impression upon my mind ; and after, half involuntarily, turning it over and over as my leisure permitted, the result was, that although I had long discontinued even to think of compositions of this sort, I determined to sketch, and ultimately did sketch, the plot of the following Drama, keeping the principle described as strongly in view as I could. On submitting to my dramatic Mentor the plan I had jotted down, he approved of it generally ; and such alterations as he suggested, I for the most part adopted, being determined that, as far as I was concerned, the experiment, if made at all, should be made as completely as I could make it.

Such was the somewhat singular origin of this attempt. One question, however, yet remains to be answered, and that is—how I came to take the rude and savage Roman, Caius Marius, for my

hero? The character of Marius I have recently learned, is one which has been suggested to more than one writer of the present day as of strong dramatic capabilities, and by them rejected, on account of some real or supposed impracticability interwoven with it. My reason, or rather my leading motive, was this. Some years ago the late Mr. Kean, being in the north of England, and having met with, or been shewn, some dramatic efforts of mine, then recently published, proposed to me, through the medium of a mutual acquaintance (I was deprived of the good fortune of an interview), to try an acting drama on this subject; which, if the performance accorded with his expectations, he proposed to bring forward. I knew well enough, even then, what it was to write for "a great actor." I had been, even then, pretty well cured of verse writing of any kind, and dramatic writing especially; and I perhaps deemed, that this proposal might have arisen out of a momentary whim more than out of any settled purpose on the part of Mr. Kean, and that it was, therefore, entitled to less attention on mine. Be that as it might, I had, at

that period other objects in view, and there the matter ended for the time. It was difficult, however, altogether to forget the predilection of so extraordinary a man as Kean for this character of Caius Marius. I have since been told it was a notion in which he remained firm to the end of his life, that Marius was unquestionably a great dramatic character, and one peculiarly fitted for himself. Otway's play under that title, I need not add, is a misnomer, as well as plagiarism, being a mere recasting of Romeo and Juliet, with Marius and Sylla substituted for Montagu and Capulet. Without at all admitting, that genius of the histrionic order at all qualifies a man to give an authoritative opinion on a subject of this sort, it yet appeared to me, that the strong conviction of such a mind as that of Kean, ought not by any means to be despised, but that, on the contrary, "*ceteris paribus*," it ought to turn the scale. It turned the scale with me at all events, for I could see no "impracticability," and, moreover, many fine points in the history, personal and mental, of the rough but great Roman, as a subject for a Historical

Tragic Drama of the English School; and, hence, the present performance, or rather attempt at performance, for it is probably nothing more. Difficulties there certainly were; and if the Drury-lane critics be not fallible, I have, as certainly, not surmounted them so far as to produce a piece fit for the modern stage, meaning by the term "modern stage," not that of yesterday, but that of to-day.

I need hardly tell the reader that having written what I thought an acting Drama, that is to say, a Play fit for the stage as it is at present; it naturally followed that I should try to prevail upon somebody to act it. I thought it best to go to the fountain-head at once; and to the fountain-head accordingly I went—or rather did my best to go. Being in town, I obtained, through the medium of an eminent literary friend, a letter of introduction to Mr. Macready, who was at that time, in name at least, attached to the Drury Lane establishment, and of whose youthful debut, and early progress in his profession, I had been an admiring witness. During the whole of my stay,

Mr. Macready was unfortunately absent: the only alternative, was, therefore, to offer the play to the manager in the usual manner, which was accordingly done. The result was a note, couched in set terms, stating that the MS. had been examined, and that the piece, though (as it pleased the manager to say) full of poetical beauties, was not, in the opinion of those who had read it, calculated to afford, on representation, a result satisfactory either to the manager, the author, or the public. Managers and actors, one would imagine, ought to know what will or will not bear the ordeal of the theatre, and my first impression was, to commit the play to that "tomb of all the Capulets" to which the diplomatic document of the Drury-Lane manager seemed to have consigned it. An author, however, always thinks twice, if not often-er, before he does any thing of the sort, and for a reason something like that which influences a Hindoo, or any other, widow to consider a little, before she consigns herself to the pile with her dear dead husband. Recollecting, therefore, that in point of fact many of our most successful plays

have *not* been those best augured of by the persons immediately concerned in their representation or production before the public, and that, consequently, there was a bare possibility that the public and the Aristarchi of Drury Lane might, even upon this point, disagree; and, recollecting, moreover, that I had been told by those on both sides of the question, that, at all events, there was some poetry in the play, although, perhaps, a superfluity of that which Dr. Johnson characterized to the unfortunate author of “Tigranes and Teribazus,” as too much “Tig and Terry;” that is to say, too much *talk* and too little *act*; and, recollecting further, that, like the “Beggars’ Opera,” “the play, as it was written, carried a most excellent moral,” as shewing “that the lower sort of people have their vices, in a degree, as well as the rich; and that they are punished for them;” as shewing, in short, the effects upon all classes, of a government by irresponsible persons of any grade of society; I determined to print a small edition, and “cast it upon the waters” to take its chance whether to be numbered amongst those things which

the world does not entirely let slip, or amongst those which, being lost on earth, the poet Ariosto waggishly asserts, "are to be found treasured in the moon."

Having done this, I gladly say "Bon Voyage," and resume those more prosaic avocations from which its composition briefly estranged me.

T. D.

CAIUS MARIUS.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A sitting Apartment.*

CORNELIA and FLAVIA seated, the latter employed in
some female occupation.

CORNELIA.

Flavia !—What, still intent ? Beshrew me, girl !
Thou almost dost belie thy blood ! How rest'st thou
At such a time as this ?

FLAVIA.

And why not, madam ?

CORNELIA.

Why not !—And yet the old Cornelian blood
Runs in thy veins ! Well may it blush. Why, girl,
If thou canst rest at such an hour as this,
Thou hardly art my daughter.

FLAVIA.

Dearest madam,
And what of good should come of my unrest ?

CORNELIA.

Good?—Foolish thing! 'Twas sure Barine's step,—
No, no—what, calm, when all is on the cast
And Rome looks hardly Roman! Gods preserve us,
Would Sylla were come back!

Enter BARINE.

Barine! now,

What news?

BARINE.

What news? Oh! Madam, every hour
Brings in a worse report. They say the Cimber
Hath join'd the Ambron; and the desert sand,
Stirr'd to fierce action by the whirlwind's breath,
Outnumbers not their host. I heard a slave
Say that he talk'd with one who, some days back,
Pass'd o'er the plain where they had rested them:
'Twas trampled all, as if some mighty powers
Had met in battle to enslave the world,
And struggled foot to foot. Nor tree, nor bush,
Nor turf, nor greenling blade, for league on league,
But told their passage, prostrated and torn
In one wide devastation,—locust-like,
Where'er they sweep is ruin. Nay, 'tis said,
That when they shout, th' o'er winging birds drop down,
Stunn'd with that giant clamour.

CORNELIA.

What of Sylla?

Who is made general?

BARINE.

Nothing heard I, madam,

And nothing could I hear. The Senate sits

In anxious consultation; whilst the crowds

Toss names about, and bandy to and fro

Conjectures, hopes, and fears. Some talk of Sylla,

Some——

CORNELIA.

Peace! he's here. Flavia, quick! hasten, girl—

Who enters?

FLAVIA (*returning*).

It is only Tubero, madam.

Perchance he comes to tell of Sylla's coming.

BARINE (*aside*).Oh! "*only* Tubero, madam!"—He's old and rich,

Valerius is poor and handsome, madam;

Bah!—these young fools!

CORNELIA.

What mutt'rest?

BARINE.

Nothing, madam.

[*Exit.*]

Enter TUBERO.

CORNELIA.

Health, Tubero !—We are anxious, all ; what news ?
Who 's general ?

TUBERO.

The Senate has elected,
After long storm and pause, Marius.

CORNELIA.

What ! Marius !

He ! the Patrician of the Plebes ! Marius ;
That bear with gilded collar ! Caius Marius !
Could Rome's patricians not afford a leader ?
Is the wine drawn, or else the vintage spoil'd,
That we must strain the dregs ? Now, by my life,
I 'd taken sword and buckler first ; aye—woman
E'en as I am—rather than this had been !

TUBERO.

Be patient, madam, pray you. Here is Sylla,
Your noble relative ; and he will tell you
He gave *his* voice for Marius.

Enter SYLLA.

SYLLA.

Save you, lady.

CORNELIA.

You are welcome, Sylla. But you had been more so
(For I must speak the truth) if that right hand
Had grasp'd the general's truncheon. Marius! Sylla!
I can't away with 't—Sylla *after* Marius!—
I cannot syllable 't.

SYLLA.

Take time, good lady;
We shall all learn.

TUBERO.

I fear, Cornelia never!
Patience is out of doors—and Caius dubb'd
“A bear—with gilded collar!”

SYLLA (*agitated*).

He 's a soldier,

A tried one; that 's enough. Say he *be* rude
And rough of speech; say that his discipline
(And that it does I, who have felt it, say—)
Doth smack of times when Roman hardihood
Had felt not Greek refinement; yet, believe me,
With all his harshness, he is like that tree
Whose leaves embrown i' the sun; but, tho' rust-like,
Deep umber'd towards the torrid eye of day,
Are ever green beneath—

Nay! no more words.

What, know ye not when Scipio erst was ask'd

“Where Rome should find another general?”

He answered “Here—in Caius;” and by my soul,

She will. “Nobility!”—When fortune lours,

And kingdoms quake to th' centre, he who doth

His duty best 's your truest noble!

CORNELIA.

Sir;

You are warm.

SYLLA.

No—no.

CORNELIA.

And do you serve with him?

SYLLA.

I do. What then?

CORNELIA.

Only I hope you 'll profit

In such a noble school.

SYLLA.

I shall; no doubt on 't.

Madam, too much of this. Who serves his country

Cannot but profit. Tubero, time presses;

There is no hour to lose. If Marius close not

Ere that pale moon be old—aye, if he spring not

Upon the Cimber like the famish'd lion,

I know him not.

I shall sup here. Meantime,
See to our preparation. Thou knowest who
And where. Why dost thou pause?

TUBERO.

Only to say
Good even. And to hope that these bright eyes
Shall gaze on us the brighter that we come
All crown'd with garlands, and victorious home.

FLAVIA.

What Rome shall smile on ne'er shall make me frown.

TUBERO.

Fair patriot! I'll take you at your word.
Perchance —.

SYLLA.

Come, Tubero, these soft enigmas
Suit not the time. Farewell!

[*Exit TUBERO.*]

Ladies, your hand.

Nay, madam, you *shall* smile. Next time, perchance,
I shall be general. Flavia!—nay! no tears!
When Rome shall weep, weep then.

Come, come; no weakness.

[*SYLLA leads them out.*]

SCENE II.—*An Apartment in the Farm-House of Marius ; the Table covered with Wine, Fruits, &c., for a Banquet.*

MARIUS, YOUNG MARIUS, VALERIUS, and CTESIPHON.

MARIUS.

Speak, then, an if thou must ;—I'll hear't ; but only
Dress not thy speech in garlands, as thou usest.
Let real wreaths content thee ; and for once
Try not to utter holiday.

CTESIPHON.

My good lord,
You are obeyed. It is my gracious office
To offer you this cup ; and having drain'd
Mine own to your best health, humbly to beg
Not only as your servitor, but i' the name
Of those more worthy of such fellowship
That you will pledge us. This to Marius' health ;
[*Drinks.*

And may Jove grant him many days like this
Vouchsafing ear to Mars.

VALERIUS, &c.

To Marius' health !

[*They drink.*

MARIUS (*getting up*).

Give me the cup—not that befool'd with flowers ;
I'll have a plainer goblet—and this once
I'll pledge you such a health ; and then no more on 't
Henceforth for ever. Health to thee, Valerius ;
To all (*drinks*). You pledge me cheerily, young
men ;

Your sun is rising and your shadows fall
The onward way to fortune—mine points backward,
And rests but on the grave. Oh ! never more
Shall day like this be mine : then why commemorate
The dead with festal flow'rs, and mock oblivion
With garlands like a bride ?

[*Much agitated.*

Bring me, for once

Again, that sword, against which this day's sun
Flash'd, till that brightness was bedimm'd and veil'd
In blood of Rome's barbarian enemies ;
Aye ; which strook down, in face of either host,
That Gaulish sworder who o'er-tower'd them all,
Then spared the crippled giant for our triumph ;—
Bring 't me, Valerius ; go thou, boy ; thy head
Is not bedeck'd with flaunting wreaths, like theirs !

[*VALERIUS goes out.*

Curse on this pageantry. It fits me not.

YOUNG MARIUS (*aside*).

What should this mean? Till now I never saw
His spirit clouded thus.

[*VALERIUS returns with the sword.*

MARIUS.

Right. Give it me. [*Takes the sword from VALERIUS.*
Come to me; let me clutch thee, for the last time.
I will not part from thee, as lovers do
With sighs; but as a friend parts from a friend,
Feeling he is not worthy!

Faithful steel!

Too trusty for this hand, which needs thee not,—
Which can but hang thee up to rust in sloth—
I'll bid thee now adieu! What want I with thee,
Unless to shame thee? Hence! I'd not misuse thee,
Nor make a baby's toy of thee, whose manhood
Shall woo thine aid no more. Yet, ere thou goest,
I'll kiss thee lover-like! and thus I sever thee
From this dishonour'd hand. If thou be fortunate,
Go find some better grasp. If not, go rust
In other halls than mine!

[*He throws down the sword.*

VALERIUS.

My noble patron,
This is too much!—you are much mov'd.

MARIUS.

No, no !

'Twill pass away anon. Speak to me not. Leave me.

[*They leave MARIUS gazing on the sword.*

Last light of Marius ! I do gaze upon thee,

Ev'n as the sailor eyes the sinking sun,

Or ere night drops on him and on the main !

[*A trumpet sounds.*

Ha !—What should mean that sound, now so unwonted,

At such an hour as this ? Thou lookest wonder ;

Enter VALERIUS.

What is the news ?

VALERIUS.

Great news, great sir ! th' Ambrones,

'Tis said, are up in countless arms, and gloom

Black, like some dark and pestilential cloud,

Upon the northern frontier. Nigh at hand

Are missives from the Senate ; and your son

Goes forth to herald them.

MARIUS (*musings*).

Missives from the Senate !

To Caius Marius ! the plebeian Marius !

The people's scorned Consul ! all unhonoured—

Save those his hand hath won !

(In sudden exultation.)

I am ~~not~~ dead ;

This heart still beats for glorious deeds ; great Jove

Doth need me yet,—and Fate hath work for me.

(Aloud) Where are the messengers ?

(Musing again.) Ev'n as the mist,

That wraps the mountain summits, is dispers'd

And leaves their rugged cliffs bright i' the air,

Now is a sudden view unveil'd, where hills

Rise over hills, some shadow'd and some light,

Kissing the dark blue sky ! I'll climb, or else

Be buried at their feet ! *(Aloud.)* Valerius !

(Musing again.)

Was it not told me, e'en in early childhood,

Seven eaglets dropp'd into my lap, high token

Of sevenfold exaltation ? Marius, yet

Thou shalt be seven times Consul !

(To VALERIUS.)

What would'st thou say ?

VALERIUS.

Methought *you* spoke, great Sir !

MARIUS.

True, so I did ;

Forgive me,—say, where are the messengers ?

[*Flourish of trumpets.*

VALEBIUS.

At hand, my lord—

The trumpet speaks as much.

*Enter Sulpicius and Saturninus, Young Marius,
Lictors, and Attendants.*

MARIUS.

Hail! Sirs, your errand?

SATURNINUS.

Let it not, noble Caius,

(For virtue is our true nobility,)

Seem strange that thus we break upon your privacy

With hasty salutation. What we say

We speak i' the Senate's name, who bids us thus,

In Rome's behalf, with tongue for the general weal,

Accost thee, Marius.

MARIUS.

From the Senate, say ye?

Mistake I not? To Marius—from the Senate?

I pray you pardon me, if it seem strange

The Senate thinks of Marius, who, in sooth,

Had nigh forgot the Senate!

SULPICIOUS.

Mighty sir,

'Tis easy for a great man to forget—

But not to be forgotten. I do pray
Your patience, sir ; our errand is the proof
Even of our doctrine. Great events, oh ! Marius,
Are great men's heralds. Is it not so, e'en now ?
The sacred soil of Rome again is trodden,
Torn, and polluted by the countless feet
Of rude, unphalanx'd, rash barbarians,
Who come to find a grave ;—even as the brand
But leaves the cloud to quench it in the dust
And vainly die in darkness.

'Tis to thee

The Senate looks to front this louring storm ;
And thus thy staff of office I deliver,
And, i' the Senate's name and in the people's,
Do hail thee Emperor. [*Gives the truncheon.*

Save thee, general !

ALL.

Health to thee, Emperor ! all hail, general !

MARIUS (*much agitated*).

I pray your patience friends. And comes this, say'st thou,
This Roman truncheon, from a Roman Senate—
This staff that never yet did point the way
Where Victory fear'd to go ;—what ! came it thence ?

SULPICIUS.

It did, great sir.

MARIUS.

And to a poor old man—
Whose little fame hath died before his breath,
And from whose name the very calendar
Feels haply shame to date? What, is there none
Of all that tread those lofty porticos,
Where kings must wait without; none there to save
Such gear as that from such a hand as this?
—Fie! this is mockery! and grey hairs, tho' bound
With wreaths, which, wither'd, still were victory's,
Are treated like the rest!—

Nay, take it, sir;

This jest doth smack o' the serious.

SATURNINUS.

Noble sir,

'Tis you that turn the serious to a jest,
And none e'er more mistim'd.

Now hear me, sir.

Hear that shall thrill through the whole heart of Marius.
Your country is in danger, and to you
She looks for help, for rescue.

MARIUS.

Speak 't again,
That I may hear aright. Give me thy hand.
Say'st thou, with honest and unvarnish'd brow,
That Rome doth sue to Marius?

SATURNINUS.

Even so.

MARIUS.

Her fiat is obey'd. Rome must command ;
Obedience is for Marius. Give me yond blade,
Valerius. *[He takes the sword.]*

Welcome ! aye ; now let me clutch thee,
Thou trusty steel ! and oh ! hear Marius swear
Thou shalt not leave his hand till Rome is safe,
Or we lie buried in one grave together,
And know not of our fortune.

Sir, I do
Obey the Senate's mandate ; but I pray you
Tell me, if so much be within your knowledge,
Who doth command in second ?

SATURNINUS.

Lucius Sylla,
Most noble Marius.

MARIUS.

Good ; the noble Sylla.
I know him well, and know him for a soldier,
A tried and brave one. Pardon me, gentlemen ;
It is an anxious hour ; I had forgotten
That travel-toil'd and weary, you do need
Nature's refreshment, if the fare of Marius
Balks not patrician stomachs. This way, gentlemen,

I pray you. Nay ! no ceremony, friends :
Plain fare is best grac'd plainly.

[*MARIUS and Embassadors go out.*

VALERIUS, YOUNG MARIUS, and CTESIPHON remain.

CTESIPHON.

Valerius ?—Why, see, if this news from Rome have
not struck him dumb. Why, man, dost thou set out thy
battle already ?—

YOUNG MARIUS.

He's general already in imagination methinks ! Come,
Valerius, let us hear thee speak. We can see thee fight
afterwards !

VALERIUS.

Thou wilt prate
Before thou fightest ; I'll say that for thee—
I cry you mercy, sir, for I believ'd
'Twas Ctesiphon I spoke to.

YOUNG MARIUS.

Take me for aught but a barbarian whilst thou car-
riest this humour about with thee ! Come, Ctesiphon ;
'tis plain he's possessed with something, and whether it
be love or war, neither is a business for us to meddle in.

MARIUS (*entering*).

Valerius—get thee forth in readiness ;

Thou shalt from me to Sylla ; for methinks
I have heard thee say thou knewest him.

YOUNG MARIUS.

Aye ; his niece too !

They say she's wond'rous fair. A very star !
Nay some philosophers hold, that the lost Pleiad
Is found again in her ! Don't they Valerius ?

MARIUS.

Peace, reckless prater. What ! is this a time
For fooleries such as these are ? Son, do you
Attend upon the ambassadors from Rome.
Do you assist him, sir. Your fine-spun sophisms
Will now get holiday ;—the wars abide not
These cobwebs of the brain !

[*Exeunt CRESIPHON and YOUNG MARIUS.*

Valerius,

Go thou with me. I have business for thine ear
And time is precious. Come.

VALERIUS.

I follow, sir.

[*They go out.*

END OF FIRST ACT.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A Chamber.**Enter TUBERO and BARINE.*

BARINE.

Now Jupiter be prais'd ! Is 't surely true ?

TUBERO.

I tell thee 'tis most certain. Where's Cornelia ?

I would fain tell her this good news.

BARINE.

Anon.

But say that Sylla's safe.

TUBERO.

Plague on thy twaddle ;

Tedious old catechist ! He's safe, though hurt—

Praise heaven ! here comes Cornelia.

Enter CORNELIA and FLAVIA.

Save you, ladies ;

And may the gods vouchsafe you health and gladness

To welcome this great news.

CORNELIA.

What is 't, good Tubero ?

Howe'er it touches me, for Rome I hope

Most salutary. How now, Flavia !—Girl !

Shame on thy coward cheeks ! I trust our garlands
Shall shew a brighter colour. Nay, speak, Tubero.

TUBERO.

The Ambrones are destroyed. E'en now great Marius
Seems bent to fertilize the very soil
Of Rome with blood of her fierce enemies.
Mars never saw such slaughter. Women rush
Upon their husband's falchions ; father's kill
Their children and then die ; despair laughs loud,
As she had chang'd her nature at the sight ;
And pity, as too weary to plead more,
Seems tired thro' very ruth—

CORNELIA.

And Sylla—

TUBERO.

He,

Thank Jove, is safe, tho' hurt ;—but that's not much.

CORNELIA.

Great Jove be prais'd !—How was 't ? Now tell us,
Tubero.

Beshrew me, but she'll faint. Why, foolish girl !
Here, lean upon this shoulder.

FLAVIA.

Pardon me—Madam.

CORNELIA.

How was 't, good Tubero ? Nay, speak.

TUBERO.

Good madam,

His wound is nothing ; but 'tis said the youth
Who brings this news—plague on 't ! his name ?—Valerius,

Did venture far for Sylla, or there might
Have been sad eyes to-day.

CORNELIA.

Flavia !—this girl,

Methinks, would mar a triumph. Sylla's safe.
And if Valerius, whom we have well noted
As a well-govern'd youth, hath been the cause,
The greater cause for gladness.

FLAVIA.

'Tis so, madam.

But pray, you pardon me. A sudden joy
Doth sometimes shew like sadness.

CORNELIA.

Heed her not, Tubero,

She will be calm anon. Is there aught more ?

TUBERO.

Not, that I know, good Madam. Young Valerius,

E'en now, doth pass with letters to the Senate,
Which haste and curiosity, ere this,
Have well assembled. Marius is to triumph ;
That's certain. Hark ! *[Distant shout.*

The people throng the streets
To see Valerius pass, who scarce can pass
Mid the tumultuous joy. *[Louder shouts.*

Hear you not, Flavia ?
The rogues will deafen Jove ! Will 't please you, madam,
To walk abroad and see the public joy ?

CORNELIA.

We'll walk with you, good Tubero. Come, Flavia ;
Sure now you're strong enough. *[Great shouting.*
Hark how the plebs,

For ever in extremes, the very concave
Rend in hoarse acclamation. Well, well, Tubero,
The rogues have cause ! Come, Flavia. Nay, good
Tubero,
No ceremony pray you. *[They go out.*

SCENE II.—*A Street in Rome.*

Enter a crowd of Citizens, and then TUBERO and Lictors.

FIRST CITIZEN.

Come, my masters, range yourselves—take order—and let every man's cap and voice be ready to greet our general.

SECOND CITIZEN.

Right: order, comrades! order! But first, by way of practice, one cheer for the general, and then rank and file. (*They shout.*) Marius for ever! Now, take order! Fall in, my masters; fall in, I tell you: this is our ovation, as well as our general's triumph! Therefore "Vox Populi" again! another cheer; and then order! [*Shout.*]

TUBERO.

Make way here. Clear the streets. Why, gentlemen! (*Aside.*) For all are gentlemen to-day. More 's pity! (*Aloud.*) Why, gentlemen! will ye clog up the triumph Your numbers come to grace! Nay, nay; stand back. Marius is coming, and he *will* have way Despite whoe'er could bar him. [*Distant shout.*]
Hear ye not?

Lictors make room for Marius.

(*Aside.*) Oh ! that Rome
Should have been made for Marius !—(*Aloud*). Why,
how now ?

Lictors, I say, move on ; and let the plebs
Make way for their own general.

FIRST CITIZEN.

What swaggerer is this ? An if the underlings
Do fume and vapour thus, this Marius, Cacus-like,
Must carry fire in 's mouth, and will make Rome
Ere long too hot to hold him.

SECOND CITIZEN.

Hush ! I tell you :
'Tis Tubero—a noble Roman ; and
My patron. Hark you now. Pray you, my lord,
Is Marius near at hand ?

TUBERO.

Nigh ? God's-my-life !
He pass'd the mural breach, by th' Esquiline,
An hour ago. [*Trumpets, and distant shouts.*
At hand ? I think good friends,
You have your answer. Room, there ; room for Ma-
rius !

Enter MARIUS, in triumphal procession ; SYLLA, VALERIUS, YOUNG MARIUS, CTESIPHON, SULPICIUS, SATURNINUS, Lictors, Captives, &c. CORNELIA and FLAVIA appear at a window. The People cry
“Marius ! Marius !”

MARIUS.

Thank you, my friends. This heart-felt salutation
O'erpays and leaves me debtor. I do pray you
To keep some kindness in reserve, and let me
Have hope to merit more. Lictors, move on ;
And look that, as ye clear the way, no Roman
Do meet or harm or rudeness—thank you, friends.

[*Shouts. MARIUS and VALERIUS passing over the stage.*

YOUNG MARIUS (*aside to CTESIPHON.*)

Quick ! hither, Greek, and let thine idle eye
Fix on yond casement. Gods ! did'st ever see
A charm like that to put out glory's blaze
And make a triumph poor ?

CTESIPHON.

By heavens a pearl !
An unspeck'd diamond !

YOUNG MARIUS.

By heav'ns, a sunbeam,

E

Made to lend light to diamonds ! if aught
Could ere reflect such beauty. Greek, I charge thee,
Thou eye her well.—Yet why ? for Rome itself
Can only have one such—ev'n as the heav'ns
Have but one moon !—Oh ! that my tongue had pow'r
To charm her from her sphere !

Lo ! she hath noted us,
And even now retires—Oh ! such a light
Should never set—

CTESIPHON.

My lord !—we must on ; already
Eyes are upon us. Hark ! (*music*) the quire !—

YOUNG MARIUS.

Away !—
The frame may go, but here the soul must stay !
[*They go out.*

SCENE III.—*The Senate House. The Senate in
their robes, with ivory wands.*

CHORUS.

In vain the mountain's haughty head
Is lifted to the upward sky ;
For lo ! the vengeful bolt is sped,
And low the scatter'd fragments lie :

Be such the fate, be such the doom,
Of all who hate or envy Rome.

In vain the shaggy pard may seek
A shelter for her brindle'd brood ;
The eagle stoops, with horny beak,
And feasts and revels in their blood :
Be such the fate, be such the doom,
Of all who hate or envy Rome.

*Enter MARIUS, SYLLA, TUBERO, VALERIUS, YOUNG
MARIUS, &c.*

FIRST SENATOR.

Marius, all hail ! I welcome thee, great Caius,
I' the Senate's name : and if 't were possible
That pain should be on such a day as this
In any Roman breast, it were in mine,
For that my tongue doth lack of resonance
To render e'en faint echo of the praise
And thanks that should reguerdon thee.

The Senate,

Not in their sole behoof, but as the voice
Of the whole public weal—of which they form
A fragment only—thank thee, Caius Marius !
Do thou wrap up in that one word what I
Would fain express, but cannot. More. In token

Of that, which is unsaid because unspeakable,
They crown thee here with that which never press'd
Brow, save such brow as thine,—the wreath of victory,
Giv'n by a grateful country. Thou hast won it ;
And worthily. So wear it, Marius. 'Tis
The laurel ; type of glory and of fame,
For both are bright and fadeless.

[*Crowns* MARIUS.

MARIUS.

Conscript fathers,

Elect and chosen of your country, Rome,
'Tis not for me—'tis not for any man,
To bandy phrases here, or plead unworthiness
In that which you deem worthy. I do thank ye,
That ye have honour'd me so far ; not daring
To think I am o'er-honour'd, or that Rome,
Who warreth with the proud, could flatter Marius.
No more of this. Because no more becomes
Or me or you, the giver or receiver.
Short phrase the best becomes the rude of speech.
This then but let me say. If there be aught
Further that Rome commands of Caius Marius,
He is his country's servant.

SYLLA (*aside to* TUBERO.)

Mark'd ye, Tubero ?

Mark'd you the high Patrician o' the Plebs,

Th' aristocrat of the democracy ?
His pride has grown a stadium ! Oh, he's worthy :
The Senate's right enough !

FIRST SENATOR.

Next, noble Sylla,
The Senate turns to you. In praising Marius
Sylla is grac'd ; for Sylla is but second
That Marius is the first ; above compare
With aught that's less than Marius ; yea and crown'd
With the same wreath undying.

But there's more.

Another wreath to show how Rome loves Sylla.
Stand forth, from 'midst the crowd, Publius Valerius.

(*VALERIUS stands forward.*)

For that thou shed'st thy blood to rescue this
For Rome, Rome's Senate hath, in gratitude,
Voted the oaken garland to Valerius.
Take it. 'Tis thine, young man.

VALERIUS.

Oh ! had it hung
Above my urn, so Sylla were but safe,
It were too much of happiness and fame.

YOUNG MARIUS (*aside*).

Ah ! say'st thou so ?—mark'd ye that, Ctesiphon ?
By Jove, so say not I ! *We* could have spar'd him !

Aye ; marry !—and have deem'd the blood of Marius
Too good for such a ransom—

FIRST SENATOR.

Now, great Marius,
My last most pleasant task is but to say,
The Senate are your guests i' the Capitol ;
And ere this day's auspicious sun hath set,
Will pour a rich libation to the Gods
For health to Marius : that he may once more
Be one of Rome's most Roman Consuls.

(Turning to the Senators.)

Rise,

Oh ! Conscript Fathers. Welcome Caius Marius ;
And joy attend his banquet !

*[The Senators rise, and MARIUS and the rest pass
over the stage, saluting them, and retire.]*

CHORUS.

The hour is past ; the deed is done ;
Their mighty thread the fates have wove ;
No foeman sees to-morrow's sun,
Or 'tempts again Feretrian Jove :
Then welcome, Marius, welcome home !
Welcome to honour and to Rome !

[Scene closes.]

SCENE IV.—*A Street in Rome.*

Enter YOUNG MARIUS and CTESIPHON, meeting.

YOUNG MARIUS.

Welcome ! my learned scout. Thou lookest brightly,
Say, hast thou sped aright ? Tell me but that,—
Then say what guerdon Rome can offer thee,
And thou shalt have 't. Nay, ne'er look doubtfully.
Shew me the neat, snug farm, by Tiber's side ;
The fruitful vineyard ; or the villa's shade
That takes thy fancy—and succeed in this,—
And (mark me)—it is thine ! We are something now,
And Marius can do somewhat—

CTESIPHON.

Noble sir ;

I have track'd her to her covert.

YOUNG MARIUS.

What, a word !—

Such gem should have a casket—aye, and of
The richest—for what veil were rich enough
To shroud such beauty ?

CTESIPHON.

Call it what you will ;
know her *Home*. Comes that not home enough,

Howe'er it be entitled ? Who, or what
The exquisite inmate is, as yet I have not
Obtain'd safe means of knowledge : for I would not
Risk overbold enquiry.

YOUNG MARIUS.

Thou didst right.

But art thou sure of this ?

CTESIPHON.

As sure, my lord,

As ever Greek was sure of any thing •

That cunning might unravel.

YOUNG MARIUS.

It is well.

For this good service thou art twice my friend,
And so shalt still be held. (*Aside*) I 'll pay him
double—

(*Aloud*) Away, and learn the rest, for I 'm on fire.
Corrupt some slave. Use all thy languages,
For thou hast many—put forth all thine art ;
And only compass this, and I shall call thee—

CTESIPHON.

What, my good lord ?

YOUNG MARIUS (*aside*).

The Polyglott of Pandars !

(*Aloud*) “ What ” didst thou say ? Why, thrice my
friend ; that 's all.

What else could I entitle thee ?

We are cut short—

Enter VALERIUS.

Away, and speed—be sure on 't !

[*Exit CTESIPHON.*

Save you, comrade ;

Why, thou look'st grave, methinks !

VALERIUS.

So do'st not thou.

Triumph, methinks, is written in that eye,

(*Aside*) And pride upon that brow. (*Aloud*) Come,

we should bear

Success more gently.

YOUNG MARIUS.

Poh ! what mean ye, sir ?

I got no oaken garland—

VALERIUS.

Say thou did'st not ;

Thou hast got something that can please as much,

Or else thy looks are liars.

YOUNG MARIUS.

So I have.

A prize the which to clutch methinks were worth

Another Marian triumph. Oh ! 'tis not

The end of war that is the end indeed ;
The end is that of which the trumpet speaks not ;
The end is that of which your annals tell not ;
The end is that which glory never names ;
The end is that which even rapine recks not ;
Below the famous, and above the base—
The choicest spoil of beauty. By the gods !
I had ne'er known that Marius quell'd the Cimber
Had I not known this hour !

VALERIUS (*aside*).

What passion 's this
That stirs his nature thus ; that nature never
Framed for such domination ?

(*Aloud*) Sir, you speak
Not like a man who humbly thanks the gods,
That he was born foredoom'd to serve his country ;
But, like some robber, whom unlook'd-for fortune
Hath loosed to prey at large—unawed, untouch'd
By gratefulness or honour.

YOUNG MARIUS.

Hast turn'd Stoic,
In downright earnest, sweet Valerius ?
Ha ! ha ! methinks I cannot chuse but laugh — !
Thou 'rt twenty years too young yet for the porch !
Hang up philosophy !

VALERIUS:

No man, I hope,
Can be too young for virtue.

YOUNG MARIUS.

Hang philosophy—

I tell thee ! or, if needs't must be a Soph,
Take Epicurus ! Psha !—Come ! come with me,
I 'll shew thee that shall make thee convertite ;
Or, if it fail, thy blood hath yet to learn
The wherefore it was risk'd ! Come ! Thou knows't
Plato

Doth say 'tis good to contemplate on beauty.

VALERIUS.

What dos't thou mean ?

YOUNG MARIUS.

Come with me and thou 'lt know.

I 'll shew thee, peradventure, a sweet bird,
Form'd to make Venus scorn her favourite dove.
Oh ! if the song be equal to the hue—
And who can doubt it that hath eyes ? I 'd not
Lose 't from my bosom for the Consulship
And all that Rome affords.

VALERIUS (*aside*).

What can this mean ?

Ev'n at his words I feel a chilly fire—

I know not what of shudd'ring feeling—creep
Thro' my whole frame.—I tremble with a fear
That knows not what it fears! Methought that Greek,
Who glided hence e'en now, snake-like, bore villany
Couch'd in his eye.

YOUNG MARIUS.

What's all this reverie?

Art seeking Plato's precedent? I tell thee,
He says, 'tis wise e'en for philosophers
To know a handsome wench, if chance they see one!
Come; wilt thou go?

VALERIUS (*aside*).

I feel a wild misgiving—
And yet it cannot be—this loose and libertine
Discourse alone would strike a kind of fear
In all who can love virtue;—and *her* beauty
Would awe such thoughts as these. It cannot be—
It is a baseless terror.

YOUNG MARIUS.

Come, philosopher!

I cannot wait for thy deep contemplations.
Wilt stay—or go?

VALERIUS.

No.

YOUNG MARIUS.

Why, farewell then!

VALERIUS.

Stop. —
(*Aside*) Methought a voice did whisper me—"Stay not
And innocence in danger—wheresoe'er
That innocence may dwell." (*Aloud*) I will go with
thee. [*Exeunt.*

END OF SECOND ACT.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*A Street in Rome, somewhat dark.**Enter CTESIPHON, disguised, and BARINE.*

CTESIPHON.

Hear this, before thou goest. If thou art false,
And play'st the traitress with us, that dark dungeon,
In which Jugurtha famish'd, is thy lot,
As sure as Jove can thunder. Serve Young Marius,
And this is but an earnest of the bounty (*gives money*)
His gratitude shall heap on thee. Beware, then ;
Thou 'rt counsell'd on both sides

BARINE.

Sir,—My Lord, Young Marius, and yourself may
rely on me. What I now have told you is sooth—he
shall find it to-night if he adventure. Only beware of
Sylla—you now know the kindred !

CTESIPHON.

We fear not Sylla. The time's past for that,
I doubt thee not ; but it is fit thou knowest

The penalty of doubt—so shalt thou be
The warier to ensure success. Now go,
Lest we should be observed ; and be thou sure
To time the hour to a minute.

BARINE.

I am school'd ;
The sun shall not be more exact than I.

CTESIPHON.

Then, fare thee well ! and prosper, for thine own sake.

[*Exit BARINE.*]

These are the magnanimous Romans ! these the Gods
Of the nether world !—By heaven ! the very wolf,
Whose life is rapine, is not like to these.—
He teareth not his fellow, and will starve
E'er he lap kindred gore. While this fell libertine,
Whom fate doth seem to have set astride on fortune,
Must tear the heart of innocence, tho' that deed
Shall stab his very friend.

What's that to thee

Oh ! Ctesiphon ? Thou art no son of Rome.
Thy country hath been crush'd beneath the hoofs
Of these her ruthless brood ; be it thy pastime,
Having made thee a slave, to see them slaves
To their own curbless passions ; having torn
Thy heart, do thou help them to tear their own ;

And laugh when they reward thee for such service,
Whom they have made unfit for any other.
Let no weak, womanish pity mar thy purpose.
This Marius doth revenge thy country, Greek ;
Then be thou grateful ; think thee of thy home ;
He strikes for thee each blow he deals to Rome.

[*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*A Chamber in CORNELIA'S House.*

FLAVIA *alone*—*she walks to the window.*

This is the Roman holiday. The sky
Glazes with the festal fires ; unnumber'd feet
Throng to the lighted temples ; and the crowds
With shows and shoutings, and the violent gusts
Of popular breath, do magnify their Consul ;
While they of higher strain bless the great Fates
For our Rome's safety, and pour fresh libations
Of joy to the immortal Gods. Amid this tumult
Silence is mine. Methinks there hangs i' th' air
Some troubles yet which augurs tell not of,
Nor will the skies reveal. Sylla I've noted
With lip compress'd by inward struggling thoughts ;
And on Valerius' brow—oh ! guest too early

For such a mansion—care, methought, did sit
In spite of smiles. *[She pauses.]*

Hear me, O ! purest Dian,
Who with unsandall'd foot dost print the snows,
But sulliest not their whiteness ; at whose breath
Even the virgin rose shews transient blush
Throughout her unsunn'd leaves, woke by a sigh
Less warm than Zephyr's ! Spread thy milk-white veil
Over thy votress ; and still rampart her
Who is but strong in thee.

Enter YOUNG MARIUS, guided by BARINE.

BARINE.

Be not too sudden—

YOUNG MARIUS.

Go—and prate not, hag.

I am resolv'd ;—and now, oh ! Aphrodite,—
Now, Venus, Cytherea,—zoned queen,—
Lend music to my tongue, such as thou gav'st
The Syrens,—or did'st teach Endymion
To woo the ice-cold Moon ! Is she not like thee
In all beside ? Then, Venus, let that bosom
Beat in soft tune with thine. Now, Cupid, help me.
(Aloud.) Such greeting as the tongue of love would give
To beauty such as thine, I give thee, lady,
In heart if not in breath.

FLAVIA.

Protect me, powers !

What man art thou ? What means this dark intrusion ?
Know'st thou that this is Rome ? and know'st thou, sir,
These are a Roman matron's floors, whose threshold
Crime never pass'd,—since virtue ever guards it ?
Unheralded thou com'st, a rude ambassador,
Whatever be thine errand ; so I treat thee.
I'll hear thee not ;—begone !

YOUNG MARIUS.

That this is Rome,
Lady, methinks, I never learn'd till now.
Rome is the queen of cities. So she is,
Containing thee ; which did she not, I wot
That boast might go elsewhere.

Nay, shun me not ;

If 'tis a crime to kneel, where adoration
Is child of sweet necessity—if to love,
Where coldness were miraculous, be sin,—
Then must I suffer.

FLAVIA.

Insolent ! Say, who art thou ?

YOUNG MARIUS.

One can love beauty as it should be lov'd ;
One can guard beauty as it should be guarded ;
One who can seek it as it should be sought ;

One can deserve it—when that it is won !
Oh ! I have known ere now what passion is,
But not like this. E'en as the bridegroom rushes
To his bride's arms, so have I yearn'd to rush,
And, if need were, bid breath and blood go forth
Amid Rome's fiercest foes ; yet, in that flame,
With hate and glory burning in my veins,
Ne'er did I feel such ardour as when now
I gaze upon those charms, and every glance
Seems call upon my manhood to be sure
The conquest shall be mine.

Nay, tremble not.

I that seem terrible, am but thy slave,
Whose life doth hang upon thee ; and whose lip
Shall echo thy commands—whose love alone
Brooks not to be commanded ; and thus claims thee
With a most gentle violence.

FLAVIA.

Unhand me,
Rash and unmanly ruffian. Thou a Roman !
Rome sure is sack'd, and the barbarian here,
Despite plebeian Marius !

YOUNG MARIUS.

(*Aside.*) Hah !—so lofty ?

By heavens I love her better for 't ; and triumph

Is doubly sweet, dash'd with a smack of scorn.
(*Aloud.*) Lady, I love thee, and in such a wise
As reason reaches not, and, therefore, seeming
Is not that which it seems. I venture all,
And I must have all, or I 've nothing won.
Now, help me, God of Love (*struggles with her*).

Enter SYLLA.

SYLLA.

Whoe'er thou art,
That thus dar'st outrage aught pertains to Sylla,
Of name or nameless—ruffian violator ;—
Slave—not of beauty, but thine own foul heart,
Thust do'st thou pay the forfeit !

[*They fight and SYLLA overcomes.*]

Enter VALERIUS.

Die, vile wretch !
Base of the base—plebeian of the plebs—
Dizzy with triumph—drunk with some small fame—
Go, hide thee in the grave.

[*MARIUS is beaten down and disarmed.*]

VALERIUS.

Great Gods ! 'Tis Sylla !
Oh ! that I had two hearts, for one is torn

A thousand ways at once. I must be quick.

Oh ! hold great sir—for your own sake, own honour,
I pray you shed not blood—such blood as that,
On such a night as this.

SYLLA.

The night becomes
The deed. The deed the blood !—and who art thou
That interlopest thus ?

VALERIUS.

Oh ! sir, my name
Is nought,—or else 'tis written on this wreath
Given to a youth men call Valerius ;
Who 'cause he saved a greater than himself
Is just thus more than nothing. I do pray you,
Not for the sake of me—nor yet of him—
But for your own great honour, that you shed not
This blood—perchance too riotous—yet young,
And which may flow for Rome.

SYLLA.

Valerius !—

Young man, what chance hath sent thee here those
powers
That guard us only know. Thy voice is fatal,
For doom is on it,—and as thou hast come,
Heaven knows to which side may the scale incline ;

But thou hast come,—I pray thee so believe it,—
In a most happy or most heavy hour.
That wreath of thine, giv'n for prolonging mine,
Saves too this villain's breath. Take thy request.
I quit him : let him go : but without word
Or passage more ; for if mine eye meet his,
Nought can delay the fate that 's on this hour.
Let him begone. I 'll speak to ye anon.

[*Turns to FLAVIA.*

YOUNG MARIUS (*aside*).

If there be swords or poniards here in Rome,
And hands to use them—that will strike, for hate,
Or fear, or gold,—then will I be reveng'd !
This hour is his—my time is yet to come.

[*Exit YOUNG MARIUS.*

SYLLA.

Why, pretty trembler ! all is over now.
Be calm. 'Tis Sylla that now speaks to you.
Come, come !

Young man, is the plebeian gone ?

I pray your pardon—'twas the deed I glanc'd at
And not the man. He is gone. The earth-sprung
ruffian

Is not Antæus ! Come, sir ; come Valerius,
Take you this arm, and let us have some parley

Of this strange outrage. Nay; you're safe now, Flavia,
A warrior on each side, and crown'd ones too!
Come, come!—no more of trembling;—come!

[*They lead FLAVIA in.*]

SCENE III.—*The Forum and Consul's chair.*

Enter two Citizens, meeting.

FIRST CITIZEN.

Sergius; well met! hast heard the news?

SECOND CITIZEN.

What news?

FIRST CITIZEN.

The life of Sylla hath been foully lanced at
By hired assassins! set on, as 'tis said,
By these illustrious Marii, or, at least,
By Marius the younger, who doth rage
'Gainst Sylla, with all venom that together
And love and hate can mingle.

SECOND CITIZEN.

Love and hate!

For what? and whom?

FIRST CITIZEN.

For beauty; and 'gainst him

Would keep it from him ! Hark ! they 're here ; to seek
For justice of the Consul ! Now. Stand close !

*Enter TUBERO with a crowd of Citizens ; Lictors
drag in a chained Gladiator.*

THIRD CITIZEN.

Bring him before him ! bring him 'fore the Consul !
We will have justice.

[*The crowd cry* " Justice, justice !"]

TUBERO.

There ;—place him there. So. (*Loudly.*) Caius Ma-
rius, Consul !—

The seat of justice is unfill'd, and Rome
Must wait for retribution. 'Twas not thus,
When Rome's patricians fill'd the Curule chair,
And consulship was duty. Oh ! he comes ;
We suitors are impatient !

*Enter MARIUS and YOUNG MARIUS. (He sits down ;
YOUNG MARIUS stands beside him ; the chair is
guarded by Lictors and armed men.)*

MARIUS.

Whosoe'er

Doth seek for justice—asking it of Rome—
For aught that Rome protects—here let him speak,
For here is justice.

SYLLA (*entering*).

I am glad to hear it,
Lord Consul,—for, methinks—or I must err
Most grossly—Rome protects her citizens
In life and weal—aye, and the innocence
And honour of her matrons and her daughters.
No more o' that. It is no aim of mine
To stir the blood by artful preamble,
Or barter truth for words. I ask for justice.
My life hath been attempted by assassins,
By whom instruct I know not : tho', Lord Consul,
Haply, by your good zeal for law and justice,
That quest may be unravell'd.

MARIUS.

Set the man
Before me who has aim'd at this ill deed.
'Tis well.—Now, Lucius Sylla, let me ask,
For such a question justice sure exacts,
Was this a brawl ? or stands this man accus'd
Of homicide premeditate—cold murder ?

SYLLA.

Some ground of quarrel there was sought ; no doubt :
That is most true—but sought premeditately.
I say premeditately, and to further

H

The ends of others ;—for what quarrel, sir,
Could this man, this paid bravo, this kept ruffian,
This stall-fed gladiator, have with Sylla ?
The wolf can have no quarrel with the lion,
For enmity asks some equality ;
And 'tis concluded that the dog is mad
That bays the moon. This, therefore, is a tool
Of some, more great than he ; and punishment,
Without enquiry, were but semi-justice.

MARIUS.

This is no inquisition. I sit here
As Consul, not accuser. Name the man,
Who hath conspired against you ; bring your proof,
And justice shall be done. As for this fellow,
Methinks the Prætor should best deal with him,
He hardly fits the forum.

SYLLA.

Are the lives
Of Senators, men who have served their country,
Grown of so little value, that the Prætor
Is judge enough for such ?

(*Aside.*) Now, Jove, avenger !

My bosom bursts if 'tis not out ?—(*Aloud.*) No, sir,
I make my accusation 'fore the Consul.
The man, who hath conspired against me, stands,

Perhaps too near the judgment-seat ; I say it,
For that his name is Marius !

YOUNG MARIUS.

It is false !

Your proofs ?—Who knows, that yond man hath my
gold ?

Who knows from what patrician treasury
It came—perchance to foster some vile brawl,
And wreck the name of Marius ? I deny
The baseless accusation.

MARIUS.

Lucius Sylla,

T' accuse a son before the judgment-seat,
On which the father sits, is somewhat harsh—
But let that pass. Yet still methinks the proofs,
In such a case, should not consist of words !
What visible motive—living evidence—
Are there for this ? Produce them.

SYLLA.

Visible motive ?—

That hatred which is ever child o' the sense
Of mercy undeserv'd. Ill clemency,
Requited by revenge. This man did violate
The threshold of a noble Roman lady.
I caught him in the deed—and I did spare him.

YOUNG MARIUS.

Gods ! Is it then become a crime in Rome,
For Marius to o'er-step patrician thresholds ?
Pardon me, sir ;—perhaps, I did not know—
Perhaps, I had no reason to believe—
That I was so unwelcome !

MARIUS.

Silence, both !

I cannot listen to such controversies
As this appears to be.—

If you have proof

To shew my son did instigate this man,
Produce it. If not, I dismiss this cause.
Words weigh not here : nor sit I here to judge
Of a street brawl !

SYLLA.

Oh ! Rome, dost thou hear this ?

What, shall the sanctity of a matron's door
Be violate—and maiden innocence,
Worst sacrilege ! shrink before ruffian rudeness,
And justice be denied us ? Caius Marius !
Consul !

[MARIUS rises.

No Consul, but a would-be King,
Or worse than that, Dictator ! I stand here

For justice. Justice is denied in Rome !

A Roman cannot find it !

CITIZENS.

You shall have it ! Sylla ! Sylla !

Down with the Dictator ! Down with the Tarquin !

MARIUS.

Ho ! Lictors, keep the peace. This is a plot.

Beat back the ruffians, Lictors ! Am I Consul ?

Or is this Rome ?

[SYLLA's friends draw, and the people join,
shouting " Sylla ! Sylla ! Down with the
Dictator !" MARIUS' party beaten in.

MARIUS.

Silence ! ungrateful wolves ! Here is my breast ;

Pierce it, if 't be your pleasure. Nay, shrink not,

This bosom fears not falchions. It hath bled

Too often for you, and it shall not grieve

To end such office ! Nay then, farewell ! I leave ye

To the masters ye have chosen. Luxury

And Pride, perchance, may bring ye softer hearts ;

And selfishness, that deifies e'en baseness,

Deserve the people's love ; that people whom

It scorns too much to hate. So be it. I would not

Stay here to mix in civil broil. The world

And rocks, to which 'tis kin. To Marius' ear
'Twas common from a child ; and when in rage,
Like one that's stung by the tarantula,
I've seen it draw the venom from his breast
With a most healing music. That wild strain
I have set some to chorus from the sea.
Haply 't will draw him forth, sounding like signal
Of friends upon the main.

FIRST CITIZEN.

Let us stand close.
There ; where the rising moon beneath that buttress
Casts solemn shadow, hardly pervious
To aught but lynxes' eyes. Softly ; there ; there.
[*They retire stealthily.*]

AIR—CHORUS.

Lo ! the crested billows, glancing,
Like white-maned steeds advancing !
'Mid the darkness lo ! the lightning
O'er the anguish'd ocean bright'ning !
Now engulf'd, our galley toiling ;
Now the breakers round her boiling ;
Not a star to twinkle o'er us ;
Waves behind, and night before us !

'Mid the restless, wild commotion,
Of the storm-tormented ocean,
Steady, seamen !—still be steady ;
'Mid all dangers, ever ready !
Tho' to-night there's skies of sadness,
'Morrow brings us light and gladness :
Darkling now may be our duty,—
Day shall shew us joy and beauty !
[MARIUS *appears amongst the ruins and comes forward.*

MARIUS.

Whence came that strain ? It is, at least, no traitor—
No liar to the heart. For, even now,
It stirs me, as, methinks, long since it did,
In far-fled, happier hours, when life was new,
And hope was high, when fame was bright, and sunset
Had not become my morn !

If friends of Marius
Be on the deep, and this be from their tongue,
Speed them, propitious Neptune ! And thou, Moon,
Shine, like some Pharos, on these mouldering towers,
Gild each green wave that ripples past their prow,
And with thy beam pilot and point their course,
As with a silver wand.—The strain hath ceas'd.
Night falls apace. How awful is this spot !—

Here fell the bolt of Scipio ! And here Carthage,
The naval crowned queen, blue Neptune's daughter,
Strong as the storms, and richer than the seas,
With all their untold gems, before the Roman
Sank down in blood and ashes. Here, ev'n here,
That swarthy Senate, dark as wintry waves,
Was quell'd for ever !

On these umber'd ruins
The sun doth wonder why he shines ; the moon
Doth trim her silver lamp only to light
The fox and owl, obscene, that haunt these walls ;
Aye or the grizzled wolf that couches there,
And prowls amid their shadows, as if scent
Of carnage still remain'd. Yon dank, black marsh,
Where the coarse flag and bristling reed choke up,
Mix'd with the fragments of the former time,
The hot and stagnant waters, once did hold
A thousand ships, that swept the azure seas
In glorious domination. Yea ; where now
The melancholy her'n or peaceful crane
Doth wade alone, a gay and varied throng
Brought riches home from many a distant clime,
And sung amid their toil.

Oh ! such a scene
Doth fit the fate of Marius. Ruin to ruin !

Deserted 'mid deserted—death in death !
And yet is Rome more blest than this ? Her streets—
Do they not shelter wolves ? Doth rapine never
Stalk 'mid her walls ? And 'mongst her stately throngs
Is there more peace—more safety—than amid
These awful relics of her fallen foe ?
Oh ! no ! the ghost of dark and ruin'd Carthage
Is not more foul than is the living spirit
Of yon, her fell destroyer ! Hover round me,
Gaunt, grimly spectre of a fallen state,
For Marius is like thee ; and, haply, soon
Shall be with thee, e'en here !

Enter from behind TUBERO, Citizens, and Soldiers.

TUBERO.

'Tis he ; this winged vulture's caught at last,
And now shall soar no further. [*Comes forward.*
I' the Senate's name,
For treason foul, and manifest rebellion,
I do arrest thee, Caius Marius,—Consul,—
But now the Senate's prisoner.

MARIUS.

(*Aside.*) 'Tis as I thought,
Their bloodhounds are e'en here.
(*Aloud.*) By whom sent, sir ?

By what authority ?

TUBERO.

By that of Sylla,
Empow'r'd and armed by the Roman Senate,
For safety of the state.

MARIUS.

(*Aside.*) For blood ; for pride ;
For safety of patrician tyranny !—
(*Aloud.*) Well, sir,—I am your prisoner, deal with me
As it seems best to you and to your masters.

TUBERO.

You must accompany us unto Minturnæ,
And there await the Senate's pleasure.

MARIUS.

Sir,

I go ; nor wish delay. Where fear is not,
Nor hope, 'tis all alike—the dungeon or
The palace ! Nay, lead on ; I have nought to say,—
Save this, my friend ; and this e'en tell the Senate,
Amid their triumph.

When their pulse is high,
And pride grows drunken over foes o'erthrown,
And deems that now its sun shall never set,
But that which had a dawn shall know no night—
Tell them, amid their extacies o'er me,
And these white hairs dishonour'd in the dust,

Tell them, that thou beheldest Caius Marius
Sitting 'mid ruin'd Carthage ! Tell them this ;
For there 's a moral in 't—a deep one too,—
And worth the Senate's marking ! Now, sir, lead on—

[MARIUS *and Soldiers go out.*

FIRST CITIZEN.

What is the Senate's pleasure as to this
Unhappy man ? Goes he to Rome ?

TUBERO.

Not so.

The Senate's orders are close custody ;
The rest is left to Sylla.

FIRST CITIZEN.

Be it so ;

We have dungeons deep enough.

TUBERO.

For Sylla's liking ?

Not so, believe me, sir ! There's but one prison
Sylla thinks strong enough for Caius Marius !

FIRST CITIZEN.

And what is that ?

TUBERO.

The grave ! You understand me.

FIRST CITIZEN.

I do—(*aside*) too well.

TUBERO.

If that you would avoid
Sylla's displeasure ; aye, and more than that,
Win his good favour,—you will strait seek out
Some resolute hand that 's fit for such a deed,
And prompt to undertake it. For his reward,
As well as yours, depend on 't, Sylla's bounty
Shall fail not of your hope.

FIRST CITIZEN (*aside*).

The price of blood
Is mostly paid, whatever else be left
Ungifted and unguerdon'd !

TUBERO.

Sir ! you answer not !

FIRST CITIZEN.

Your pardon, sir. I was in thought—and now
I do bethink me. In the citadel
There toils a slave ; a Gaul, methinks, by race ;
Who seems as he were of the very stones
That Pyrrha and Deucalion cast behind them
To renovate mankind ; hard as the rock
On which he works—to whom both tears and smiles
Are equal strangers,—and who sits i' the sun,
Not knowing that he shines. This clod of earth
Shall do our work ; and, if he's paid with freedom,
Will be far over-paid.

TUBERO.

This is your business.

Mine is to say, solely, "it must be done."

Come, let us see this fellow.

[*Exeunt.*]SCENE II.—*A Dungeon.* MARIUS *asleep on a couch.**Enter* FIRST CITIZEN, *followed by* LYGDAMIS.

FIRST CITIZEN.

Softly !—he sleeps. 'Tis well. Hist !—hither, fellow ;
Here, take this sword, and, on him who lies there
Do present execution—without pause.

LYGDAMIS.

Ho ! Kill him, in his sleep ?

CITIZEN.

But only kill him,
And take thine own way. See ! All this is gold.
Do this—and freedom and that gold are thine.

LYGDAMIS.

Freedom for murder ! Free to stab men sleeping !
Who is 't that ye would kill ?

CITIZEN.

What 's that to thee ?

Do it ; and there is thy reward. Refuse ;
And we 'll find one shall do as much for thee.
Remember—and be prompt—and speed thee well !

[CITIZEN *goes out.*

LYGDAMIS (*looking at MARIUS*).

Well !—I am sent to kill this poor old man—
Here, on the couch—and sleeping too ; and if
I had a heart, as some men seem to have,
Would I not shrink to dabble yon white hairs
In blood ?—aye, blood that 's innocent, perhaps !—
I have no heart !

Lygdamis' heart is dead ;
For love, and fear, and hope, are strangers all
To the vile slave. Conquer'd ; spar'd ; sold to toil ;
Degraded ; trodden on ; mock'd ; scourg'd ; and scorn'd ;
Life is to him a blank, or worse than that ;
And, therefore, recks he not to take anothers,
Who would with equal ease toss down his own.
Thus, then, I earn my hire.

[*He prepares to strike.*

The old man stirs ;
I cannot strike him thus. Whate'er his features,
His hairs are reverend white.

MARIUS (*struggling in his dream*).

Hah ! hah !—well put !—

Well struck ! but 't will not do !—no. Now—I have thee—

Down with thee !—yield, thee, Gaul—down, 'tis in vain !
Thou art mine, giant !

[MARIUS *starts on his feet. He and* LYGDAMIS *glare on each other. LYGDAMIS trembling violently.*

MARIUS.

Who art thou ? and wherefore
Art thou come hither ? Speak !

LYGDAMIS (*with great difficulty.*)

To murder thee !

MARIUS (*after looking at him long and intently.*)
Thou murder Marius ?

Why ! ere I awoke
I saw that quailing eye ? Do I not know thee ?
What ? Thou ! whom in that red Numantian field
I vanquished and then spared !—Thou more than slave,
Whose very breath is alms—who hold'st thy life
On sufferance merely—who defraud'st the kites
Of that which then was theirs—for I lack'd not
Thy clumsy limbs and huge anatomy—
What ! Thou kill Caius Marius !

[LYGDAMIS *drops his sword.*

Thou dost well !

This is no feat for thee. Go tell thy masters,
If they would murder Marius, they must send
A better instrument ! Begone.

[*A trumpet sounds.*

YOUNG MARIUS, SATURNINUS, &c., *rush hastily in.*

YOUNG MARIUS.

Down with the ruffian ! Thank th' immortal Gods
Marius yet lives !

MARIUS.

Harm him not. He 's a friend.

What does this mean ?

SATURNINUS.

It means that Caius Marius

Shall yet be seven times Consul ! Sylla's pride
Hath oped the eyes o' th' people, who now say
Give us back Marius—often injured Marius !
The stay o' the Commonwealth ! The greater worn,
Aye, and alarm'd, with thirst insatiate
Of blood and never-tired proscriptions, wrung
By fear-own'd debts or base life-ransoms, look
Cold and averse, and Rome but waits for Marius
To shake off her dictator—all Campania,
By Glabrio rous'd, and his Illyrian cohorts,
E'en now is in rebellion.

MARIUS.

Sir, Rome never
In vain shall wait for Marius. Boy, your hand.
Have with you, sirs. And come thou too, good fellow,
I know thee, and will find thee better service
Than killing Caius Marius.

As for you,

(Citizens kneel.)

I know that force compelled you to the deed.
You 're pardon'd. As we go along, my friends,
You 'll tell me all hath chanc'd.

Follow me, sirs,

Justice goes hand in hand, now, with *Revenge* !*[Exeunt Omnes.]*SCENE III.—*Rome. A Chamber.* FLAVIA alone.

FLAVIA

Alas ! what load of grief wing'd time can carry,
And oh ! how swiftly bear it ! O ! how brief
The little space since I could say that never
I had known pain or fear—and now, too well
With both, I am familiar : Sylla exiled—
My mother absent—and our enemies

(I shudder at the thought), the lords of Rome
And Roman destinies. Great Gods protect me !
Not to be known is now my only safety :
Obscurity my refuge.

Heav'ns ! who's here ?

(*Enter VALERIUS.*)

Valerius !—

VALERIUS.

Now all blessings that the gods
Store up for innocence and grace await thee,
And ever be about thee—Flavia !

FLAVIA.

Valerius—

What do'st thou here ?

VALERIUS.

Flavia—what do I here ?

When thou 'rt in peril, say where should I be ?

FLAVIA.

Oh ! but thou know'st the danger—the dread risk !
Thou know'st that Marius is our enemy ;
Well, thou do'st know all that hangs o'er us now,
And what fell passions wait on this sad hour !—
If thou wert traced here—

[*Shudders, and pauses.*]

Why, wilt thou risk

A life so precious for the sake of one,
Who, if she own'd a hundred times the means,
That in these civil tempests e'er she can,
Could ne'er repay thee ?

VALERIUS.

Risk a life for thee !—

Why, that I 've done for cold and formal duty ;
That would I do for sake of innocence,
Howe'er endanger'd—Risk my life !—I've don 't
Even for a soldier-like punctilio—
A thing of drum and password—but for thee—
Oh ! let me use some other better word :
Let me for thee say I'd lay down my life,
Happy—because assured one tear of thine—
One priceless tear—would drop upon my grave,
And consecrate the flowers that there, thenceforward,
Methinks would grow for ever—thro' all change,
Changeless—e'en like his love who lay below.

FLAVIA.

This is wild talk Valerius !

VALERIUS.

It may be so,

Flavia, tho' it be sweet. Let me be calm then
For calmness now is duty.

Hear me Flavia :

Rome is—the heav'ns do see 't—no place for thee
Till these dark times be gone. I'm weary of them ;
But let that pass—and my solicitude,—
All that disturbs the rest of poor Valerius,
Is, that thou should'st be safe. Thou shalt be so,
If that thou wilt confide in me, and link
(Oh ! trust too precious !) for a few short hours,
Thy destinies with mine.

FLAVIA.

Valerius !

I am—as well thou know'st—a helpless outcast,
Scarce worth a thought—but were I twenty times
More than I am, I would confide in thee.
I pray thee say no more upon this theme—
At least, not now, Valerius !

VALERIUS.

Not now, Flavia !

Oh ! were I sure—sure that another now—
Some happier hour than this—some summer hour—
Some halcyon moment—born of azure skies,
And nurs'd in sunshine—were in store for us,
Then would I speak no more. Alas ! this darkness
May not—oh ! God, that I should say the word !
May never find a morn ; and therefore, Flavia,

I will speak one word more upon this theme
And ask thee but to hear it—not to answer,
Save by such hearing. I do love thee, Flavia,—
Love thee above what eloquence could tell,
With such an hour as this to utter it.
What would'st thou say—?

FLAVIA.

Oh ! talk not so, Valerius,
At such an hour as this : but let us rather
Pray that these troubles shall be well o'er past
And summer smile again ;—that goodness may
Have breathing time, and better suns come round
When innocence hath safety.

VALERIUS.

Only say
That when that summer comes, thy breath to me
Shall bring not winter—only say thou wilt not
O'ercloud this halcyon time—Heaven send it soon—
And I am blest.

FLAVIA.

(*Faintly*) Oh ! no—no—no, Valerius—

VALERIUS.

No more !—oh no word more !—that tremulous silence,
Is breath enough for me ! Time flies apace.
We that are perill'd must be firm, my Flavia,

When firmness is best love. Come in with me ;
There's yet an hour to spare,—and thy departure
Shall soon be plann'd. But ere we go, first tell me,
Can'st thou, dear Flavia, trust in that old slave
That tends upon thee ?

FLAVIA.

I know not, Valerius.
One time methought I could ; but treachery now
Methinks doth enter at our very casements,
Ev'n with the air we breathe !

VALERIUS.

It is too true !
We will not trust her. Let me tend on thee,
And tremble not. Flavia, the day will come
When we, who shake, shall smile at this dark hour !
Come, cheer thee, dearest Flavia. [*They go in.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*One of the Gates of Rome.**(Flourish of trumpets.)*

Enter MARIUS, VALERIUS, YOUNG MARIUS, SULPICIUS,
Officers, and others.

MARIUS.

They are repuls'd then?

YOUNG MARIUS.

Scatter'd, like the leaves

By a November whirlwind.

MARIUS.

It is well.

Let them flee back to Sylla; and to him
Tell their mishap! What news of him?

YOUNG MARIUS.

He is

Within ten leagues of Rome, 'tis said—

VALERIUS (*aside*).

But ten!

L

Then, Flavia, thou art safe. At least my hope
Cannot but think so—

YOUNG MARIUS.

They report, he left
Prænestè garrison'd—and I fear his strength
Sanction'd as much—too well. What are his plans,
Perchance we 've brought you one can better say.

MARIUS.

Whom?

YOUNG MARIUS.

Tubero—the senator—his friend !
Him we have ta'en—hard on his road to Sylla ;
And in disguise ! I fear me as a missive
From traitors, here, in Rome.

MARIUS.

What ! i' th' Senate ?

Ah ! Aristocracy—sleek homicide—
As hollow as the hemlock, and more deadly ;
Furr'd like the ermine—talon'd like the pard—
With heart of venom, and with breath of balm ;
Still wilt thou tear the hand that pats thee ? Race,
Born to lap blood ; let blood then be your doom !
Bring in the traitor.

(TUBERO is brought in.)

Welcome ! sir ! Thou com'st

Well tim'd ! We want thy information. Aye !
And as our need is, so must be our means.
Tell what thou know'st. 'Tis well ! Refuse. The rack
Shall wring it from thee. Now thou know'st our mind.

TUBERO.

I knew 't before ! Think'st thou the Marian kind
Can be mistaken ? Or that any man
Ere coupled mercy with the sound of Marius ?
I see my fate ; and am prepared to meet it.
Enough. Know then, my errand was to Sylla !
To hasten his approach ; and well assure,
No man in Rome, unless for fear or gold,
Will strike a blow for Marius !

MARIUS.

Say'st thou so ?

Insolent slave ! But he shall soon try that.
Where is he ? Speak.

TUBERO.

He is within ten leagues

I know of Rome ; and with a pow'r that thou
And thy stalk-fed plebeians shall wax pale at.
Farewell. I speak no more.

MARIUS.

Thou hast said enough !

Your best intelligence is ever brief.

Thou shalt have speedy largess for thy news.
Take him away ! and let the axe forestall
His place in Sylla's triumph !

(TUBERO is taken out.)

Gentlemen,

Time presses. We must act. Son, go, take order
Within the Capitol. And thou, Valerius,
See that the walls are triply mann'd. Dispose
Strong out-posts, east, from the Flaminian gate,
And change them every hour. By such relief
Treachery may best be baffled. To thy zeal
I trust this service. See to 't well. Take heed
Such charge be not misused—and let no cause
Tempt thee to quit thy post, ev'n for an hour.

Farewell !

[Exit VALERIUS.]

Come son !

[Exit MARIUS.]

YOUNG MARIUS.

I follow,—sir,—in a breath !

[He walks about disturbed.]

'Tis said—those in the crisis of their fate
Are buoyant oft of spirit, and mount high,
Or ere they sink—as if the soul elate—
Rose on the waves of fortune.

Shipwreck'd wretches,—

Men shut in plague-struck cities,—will, they say,

Make revelry, and play strange freaks o' th' brain
Amid fate's very billows. Even thus,
Methinks, it is with me. If in this conflict
I perish, I will sneak not to my urn
Like a gull'd priest of Cybele ! but die
Sate (if that may be) with fierce delight ;
The greatest—if the last—that fate can give me ;
And sweeter, because hard to be obtain'd,
And dash'd with perturbation. I am tost
Upon a sea of passion : but my course
There are two burning stars to guide. The one
Oh ! Love is thine,—the other is—Revenge !

Enter CTESIPHON.

Ha ! art thou there ?

CTESIPHON.

I am, my lord.

YOUNG MARIUS.

Speak quickly ;

For I am rack'd—am mad with this suspense !

Hast trac'd out her concealment ?

CTESIPHON.

Sir, I have.

YOUNG MARIUS.

Art sure on't—or art sure that, if thou hast,

Thy foot-prints are unseen ;—and thou, who track'st,
May'st not be track'd ?

CTESIPHON.

Sir, *all* is safe—all sure !

And as an earnest of this certainty,
I give you here my hand, and promise you
They 're in your power this night—this very night !
And here 's the earnest.

YOUNG MARIUS.

Rapture ! ecstasy !—

Methought he chang'd, when he receiv'd his charge.—
Hand did'st thou say ? Aye, give it me ! Nor shall it
For this—perhaps, last service—part from me
Unguerdon'd. Take this gold. Until to night
I part not from thee. Then ; when we have sped
As thou assurest me,—I'll give thee means
To quit this scene of blood and violence—
Whate'er becomes of Marius. Come with me ;
And let us make success a thing of fate.—
If I must perish now, let Marius die
Triumphant to the last. Favour'd of love,
And in such sort as man was never yet !
Or, if not that, victorious in revenge.—
Come, counsellor.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*A Garden and Villa. Night.**Enter VALERIUS, with a cloak.*

VALERIUS.

Now, oh ! ye stars—that gaze on this drear night
From out yond shadowy dome, if it be possible,
As men do say, that some of ye can be
Malignant—hide your lights—and if those question,
Who spell the heav'ns for words of fate, and read,
Writ in your course, the doom of enemies,
Answer not—I beseech ye. But oh ! suffer
Your beams, ye orbs, that smile on innocence,
To lamp our darkling steps, and, 'mid the snares
Of lust and murder, guide our umber'd way.—
She comes ?—not yet. How is 't with thee, oh Rome,
That those, who would die for thee, seek to leave thee ?
Oh ! that thou should'st become a den for factions
To tear each other—and men seek to rule thee
Whose empire still is ruin ! I'st not thus ?
E'en as the wintry gusts and ruins contend
Which shall be master—that fell masterdom
Whichever has 't, is ravage !—the wide waste
Of giant inundation—or the sweep
And reckless triumph of the winged wind !

So is it with thee, Rome : thou still must suffer,
O'ermaster thee who may.

Flavia ! she comes !

Too bright a beam for such a night as, Rome,
Doth now enshroud thee ; fallen queen o' the world,
Obscured in blood and tears—

FLAVIA (*entering*).

Valerius !

VALERIUS.

My Flavia ! Tremble not. Do not yond stars
Look down on this dark hour ? and innocence
In heav'n, if not in Rome, is sacred. Flavia,
Time presses, and ere morn we must be far
From danger and from Rome.

FLAVIA.

But one last look at this beloved home !—
And then I go, Valerius !

Enter YOUNG MARIUS and Attendants.

YOUNG MARIUS.

Save you, lady ;—

And, you, sir !—We 're well met ! although, methinks,
'Tis a new hour for travel—in such times,
And without passports, too ! At least I cannot

Well think, 't'at Sylla's niece and Marius' vassal
Were bent on open journey. If mistaken,
Tis easily put right.

VALERIUS.

Wretch

YOUNG MARIUS.

Ha !—Be this

As 't may, this is no hour—no path for beauty
To venture forth unguarded. This fair lady
I will protect as doth become her. Thou
May'st take thy way, e'en as it pleaseth thee.
I shall not condescend to stop thy course,
Deserter !—Patron leaver !—Fugitive !
Sylla, perchance, may need thee. Marius, haply,
Can shift without such succour !

VALERIUS.

Art thou a Roman ?

Art of that noble race who have inscribed
Those banners, waved so oft in victory,
“ Peace to the cottage ; to the tyrant war ;
“ We spare the lowly, and strike down the proud !”
Call'st thyself “ Roman”—and wilt do a deed
Accurs'd by all Rome's Gods,—whose temples, sure,
Are the best guards of innocence and virtue ?—
Thou canst not do this, Marius !

M

YOUNG MARIUS.

Prate no more !

I came not here to listen to thy whine !
Quit thou the lady, and e'en take thy course
Whither thou wilt. If not, ye are attach'd
The spies of Sylla and the Consul's foes,
And traitors to the Senate and the State.
Now ;—take thy choice.

FLAVIA.

My choice *is* ta'en, Valerius !

Let him arrest us,—let his savage father
Doom us to death, or torment,—or to both !
There is no terror in such death, Valerius,
To those who truly love—believe 't there is not—
No agony—no pain !—'Tis but to bless them,
To join two souls, in essence one already ;
And the last sigh that wafts them to each other
Is sweeter far than zephyr's, and more kindly
E'en than the gentle spring's. Oh ! in such breath
Live twenty summers, in their bloom of beauty,
With all their smiling suns ; and to die thus
Is then to live indeed. Mine own, my brave,
My dear Valerius, thou—thou hesitate !

VALERIUS.

I do not, Flavia—no ! no !

Marius ! monster !

No, no. It cannot be. Thou dost but try me.
There are some deeds impossible on earth,
Or how should there be hell ? Thou dar'st not do it.
And hast, methinks, hardly the heart to say it.

YOUNG MARIUS.

Fool not thyself, Valerius. Yield her to me,
Or all those hopes are dreams ;—false as the winds ;
Fleeting and unsubstantial, as the foam
Left on the bright shore of some summer sea.
Speak but the word. She lives.

FLAVIA.

An if he did,—

If that 't were possible such baseness could
Exist in aught that Flavia says she loves,
Think'st thou he 'd speak for *me* ? Oh ! no, no, no
Rather than that, I'd do as Lucrece did,
But quicker far than Lucrece. Dost thou shrink,
Valerius ? Oh ! an if I thought thou could'st,—
Much—(and there is no shame to say it now)—
As I have lov'd thee,—I should deem of thee
But as that blotch'd, rank flow'r, toad-like, that seems
As nature made it to shew how a flower
May out-do e'en things loathsome—and even thus
Turn from thee, could I think that such a thought

Could ever shame that bosom.

(*To MARIUS.*). Threaten'st *thou*

Death?—Foolish ruffian, to imagine e'en
That death out-uglied thee! I do defy thee,
Thee and thy race; and if ye think to mend
Your blood by spilling better than your own,
Seize the occasion! Come, Valerius.

YOUNG MARIUS.

Have then thy will. Away with them!

VALERIUS.

One moment.

Caius,—we have been friends. That 's little. For
Myself I reckon not; but I would save thee,
Ev'n for that friendship's sake, from such a deed
As men, however black, would tremble at.
Look on that face—And whatsoe'er become
Of me, oh! injure not a bosom, which
Innocence self might make her latest refuge,
And grace make doubly gracious, when disgrac'd
In every heart beside. Oh! can such beauty
Sort with such sound as death?

YOUNG MARIUS.

Sir! If that death

Be doom'd,—that doom fell from no lip of mine.
Silence I say—I'll hear no more. Death hath

Been spoken. After that there 's but one word
Can follow. 'Tis revenge!

Take them away!

If love be scorn'd—then why should fury stay!

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—*The Capitol.*

Enter MARIUS armed, SATURNINUS, and others.

MARIUS.

Let all the walls be mann'd, without more pause,
And let Cecilius and his chosen cohorts
Be drawn within the Capitol. This rock
Ere now hath been Rome's saviour; and again
Shall be—so please the Gods—if Marius
Be narrow'd to its confines.

Saturninus.

SATURNINUS.

Great Sir!

MARIUS.

I'll perish on this rocky heart
Of Rome, ere budge one inch to Sylla. S'life!
Is order sent to bid Cecilius
Bring in his cohorts?

OFFICER.

It is done, Lord Consul.

[*Trumpet sounds.*]

MARIUS.

'Tis well.

Enter Sulpicius.

Sulpicius, welcome ! What's the news ?

SULPICIOUS.

Sylla's at hand, Lord Consul ; and his power
Is not to be contemn'd. E'en at this moment,
Rome is environ'd from the Cœlian
To the Flaminian gate !—and o'er the walls
They have lanced this proclamation, setting price
On both the Consuls' heads. [*Gives a paper.*]

MARIUS (*reading aside*).

So. They have priced me, as they would a wolf !
No matter. Yet, methinks, the head of Marius
Were worth a few denarii more than his
They 've honour'd by a like proscription ! Well :
When they have got them, they 'll be little worth,
And of most even value !

(*Aloud.*) Is this all ?

To pay for murder is not new in Rome !—
Is there nought else ?

SULPICIUS.

There is, my lord: and that
More nearly touches us. I fear me treason
Lurks 'mid our troops; and some that should be true
Are making peace with Sylla.

MARIUS.

“Traitors,” say 'st thou?
Amongst our nearest? Then all 's over! Death
Shall be our pass-word now; and Marius die
As he hath liv'd, stern to his enemies!

*Enter YOUNG MARIUS, with VALERIUS, FLAVIA, and
Attendants.*

What 's here?

YOUNG MARIUS.

I know not. But I fear me treason.

[MARIUS starts.]

Well may you start, my lord, at such a sound,
At such a time, of one so lov'd—so trusted!
Such is the world; at least so 'tis at Rome!
This gallant here—to whom—if gratitude
Were now a thing in fashion, such a course
Were worse than death—we have waylaid and ta'en
Upon his road to Sylla; who, it seems,
Is now again the Orient, and so worshipp'd
Of all who knee the rising sun.

VALERIUS.

'Tis false !

And thou, who say'st it know'st that I am true.
I may have sought to save beauty and virtue
From fangs like thine ; but treason never yet
Was inmate with Valerius.

MARIUS.

Beauty, forsooth !

Ha ! And whence comes this syren who hath caused
This sudden zeal for chastity ? Whence comes she ?
Answer me that—(*pauses*)

By heavens the foolish boy

Is right enough ; there 's poison in her eye.
The true patrician guile. Hold up thy head.
By Jove, the rainbow eyebrow—and the lashes
Like silken fringe of finest woof—I 've seen
Ere now !—Whence com'st thou, damsel ?

FLAVIA.

From the house

Of Lucius Sylla. Start'st thou ?—Never think
I heed thy frown, old man ! Oh ! no. The blood
That 's in these veins knows not of fear—like that !
This let me say—and freely I do say it,
Despite thee, Caius Marius—if there be treason
I am the traitress ! I did lure this youth ;
By the fond love he bears me—and which love

I do return ; to rescue me from Rome—
Which thou hast made a theatre for blood,
For cruelty !—Aye ! rage—and gnash thy teeth,
Base, heartless, hoary-headed ruffian !

MARIUS.

Girl !

Beware !—This is no place—this is no hour
For woman's trifling. Mark !—Tempt not thy fate ;
Tis on a breath. Be wise, and speak no more.

FLAVIA.

Yes ! I will speak ! I scorn thee and thy mercy—
If that thy race could know what mercy is !

[MARIUS *beckons a Soldier.*

Aye—whet thy knife upon thy villain's heart,
Stony with murder. Let it have its way !

MARIUS.

This is thy last. Out with thy blade, thou fellow.
This is the last act of the seven-times Consul !
Thinks't thou, thine eyes of diamond, and that hue,
Would match the Alpine snows, when the young morn
Doth tint their coldness with a roseate blush,
Shall dazzle Marius ? Thou dost speak to one
Pric'd like a wolf—and like a wolf he shall
Lap all the blood he meets.

[To YOUNG MARIUS

Begone, hot fool !

This is no time for dalliance ! Kneel down, syren,
And ask the Gods what wilt. One single minute
I give thee. 'Tis thy last.

VALERIUS.

Oh ! break my heart !

Marius !—thou art a father. I was wont
To call thee so in far-gone, happier hours
Look on her. Thou'rt a man ?

MARIUS.

I was a man ;

But Rome's patricians can work miracles,
And I am man no longer. Talk no more :
Thy turn comes on apace.

[To FLAVIA.

Quick ! make thee ready

VALERIUS.

Flavia !—my Flavia !

FLAVIA.

Tremble not, Valerius ;

I tremble not ! Believe 't 'tis nought, Valerius,
Or but the acting of a marriage rite
That leads us to Elysium. Oh ! so view it ;
And see thou bid me not " farewell ! " But rather
Think that we only meet—now—in this hour !

This only let me ask. Perhaps it may be
A woman's fantasy,—but do not look
On me, Valerius, when that I am dead.
Thou can'st not see me *then*,—unless 't were possible
That thou could'st see my heart ;—then thou would'st
know,
That I did die, with my last thought on thee.
Oh ! grasp my hand till I shall kneel. I would not
Their ruffian touch should aid one step of mine ;
And when that I have knelt—then turn away
Thy face, and speak no more—

[*She kneels.*

One kiss—'tis over !

Enter OFFICER in haste.

OFFICER.

Consul, the city's yielded ! all is treason !
Cecilius is slaughter'd, and his cohorts
Make strong the opposite ranks—all 's on the cast,
And Sylla near at hand. The Senate hath
Proclaim'd thee traitor—thee and thine ; and offer'd
Gold unto him or them shall bring you in,
Dead or alive !

MARIUS (*in a transport of rage*).

Slaves ! Cowards ! Ermin'd wolves !
Alive !—what ? know not, yet, the dotards, Marius ?

Alive!—to kneel to Sylla and his Senate!

Let me have breath, oh! rage! Stop me not yet!

Sleek, brindle'd tiger! He, at least, shall feel;

And blood be paid for blood. Oh! vengeance! vengeance!

I'll drink thee to the dregs; for thou art sweet.

Now for one blow, that shall avenge thee, Caius!

Make ready, slave. Aye, if the very heavens

Should weep to see this deed; yea, earth turn sick,

And hell itself shrink from 't;—it should be done,

Despite of even hell! Aye; blood! I choke—

Oh! hate,—bar not thyself; and in thy rage

Change place with whining pity! Scorpion-like

Die not by thine own venom! But one breath,

Ye Furies!—one breath more—give 't me. My brain

Doth burst—methinks! One breath—but one—one—
word—

Stri—Strike!

*[As he utters the last words, he reels, and falls
down dead at FLAVIA'S feet. VALERIUS
seizes the Soldier's sword.]*

VALERIUS.

Ruffian! Hell shrinks from this, and mighty heaven

Doth strike for innocence now. You, soldiers! Romans!

And murder helpless women!

YOUNG MARIUS.

Strike him down !

Seize him, I say ! Traitors !

VALEBIUS.

Keep off ! I warn you.

In such a cause I can lose twenty lives !

Who closes with me—dies !

(A crash of trumpets, and loud shouts of "Sylla ! Sylla !" Young Marius drops his sword !)

SYLLA *(without)*.

Turn thee ! thine hour is come,

Marius—thou man of blood ! 'T is Sylla calls.

Make way, I say. Where art thou, Caius Marius ?

Enter SYLLA, Soldiers, &c.

(VALEBIUS stepping forward ; taking the sword from his hand, pointing to Marius' body.)

There !

[Curtain drops.]

FINIS.

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